



ANCIENT SKIES

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NEW ZEALAND'S TAPANUI EXPLOSION

OUR 100TH ISSUE

BY DR. JAN PAJAK*

The majority of readers have a good knowledge of the Earth-shaking explosion which occurred over the Central Siberian Plateau near the Stony Tunguska River in 1908 AD, but few are aware that a similar, even more devastating explosion occurred over the South Island of New Zealand in 1178 AD.

THE TUNGUSKA EXPLOSION

At 7:17 AM on the morning of June 30, 1908, a cylindrical object was observed by numerous eye witnesses blazing westward across the cloudless skies of central Siberia. The object exploded at about 5 kilometers above ground level, 113 kilometers north of the small trade station Vanavara. The explosion devastated over 500 square kilometers of native taiga forest, felling trees sometimes up to 75 kilometers distant from the center of the explosion. All the felled trees were lying parallel to each other with their trunks pointing to the center of the explosion. The whole devastation area formed a unique triangular pattern - pointing magnetic south. There is almost no "hard" evidence as to what actually happened at the Tunguska site, because the only recognized evidence of the high-altitude explosion are fallen trees, small "trinitite" globules, mysterious illness amongst the local population, and the reports of numerous eye witnesses. There is no crater at the Tunguska site.

*This article is based upon the author's treatise on the subject entitled "Tapanui Cataclysm - An Explanation for the Mysterious Explosion in Otago, New Zealand, 1178 AD" (ISBN 0-9597698-7-0). Published privately, the treatise is available from the author at 248 Taieri Road, Dunedin, New Zealand. This article is Copyrighted (C) 1990 by Dr. Jan Pajak, All Rights Reserved, and may not be copied without the prior written permission of the author.

Dr. Pajak was born in Wszewilki, Poland in 1946. He studied at the Mechanical Engineering Department of the Technical University of Wroclaw, Poland, receiving the degree of Master of Engineering and Engineer in 1970. He worked as a lecturer at the Wroclaw University and specialized in Computer Assisted Design and in 1974 he obtained the degree of Doctor of Technical Sciences from the same University. In 1982 he went to New Zealand, becoming a citizen of that country in 1985. After a Post Doctoral Fellowship at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand, he was appointed as a tutor in Computer Programming at Southland Community College in Invercargill and in 1988 he accepted the position of Senior Lecturer at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand, a position which he still holds.

Initially the Tunguska blast was attributed to a gigantic meteorite plunging from the heavens, but neither the physical evidence available at the site, nor the testimony of eye witnesses matched the course of events expected for this cause. Then a number of other "natural" explanations were proposed - a comet, a cluster of anti-matter, a black hole, etc. But again, none of them matched the existing evidence. In 1961, the Soviet scientist Dr. Aleksander Kazantsev and a group of his followers, concluded that the event which was previously called the "Tunguska Meteorite" was in fact a technological explosion of a large malfunctioning spaceship. (1)

THE TAPANUI EXPLOSION

Until recently the Tunguska Explosion was thought to be the only one of its kind on our planet, but in 1987 the author of this article came across what is now called the "Tapanui Crater", the name of which originates from the name of a small township in the vicinity of which the crater is located. It was formed in 1178 AD in the Otago Province of the South Island of New Zealand. This huge crater has the dimensions 900x600x130 meters, and is accompanied by a triangular devastation area, about 350 kilometers long, similar to that of Tunguska. The effects of the Tapanui explosion are still noticeable today in New Zealand, over 810 years later.

The Tapanui Crater displays all the evidence which is known from the Tunguska Explosion. It caused the radial uprooting of the forests in the triangular devastation area; trees lying down with their trunks pointing at the centre of the crater; it produced trinitite globules; it indirectly can be connected with a strange illness known locally as the Tapanui Flu; it also was observed by numerous eye witnesses who maintain the records of this event in their oral tradition. But in addition to the similar types of evidence, the Tapanui region contains a number of additional features which are not found at Tunguska, namely, Tapanui has a huge crater resulting from the near-ground explosion, the entire area is magnetized, there are splinters that can be interpreted as parts of a spacecraft, and the so-called "china stones" at the site, which consist of fresh organic matter trapped inside at the moment of the explosion.

The Tapanui Crater has a fascinating history, because it was well-known for centuries by the indigenous people of New Zealand, the Maoris, whose oral tradition indicates that an extraterrestrial spacecraft exploded there. But modern science has rejected their stories, explaining the crater as originating from a landslide, that is, the erosion of the ground. The author of this article was the first scientist whose explanation for the causes of the Tapanui Crater exactly corresponds to that claimed by the Maoris. The unusual aspect of the author's ex-

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planation is that it was first provided theoretically, long before he was aware of the existence of the Tapanui Crater. Here is the history:

Since 1972 the author has conducted intensive research on a magnetically propelled flying vehicle which he calls the "Magnocraft." (2) Among the numerous topics he investigated, are included the effects of possible explosions of the craft. He established that if the Magnocraft explodes, it must create a unique pattern of destruction, which should be easily distinguishable from any other catastrophic land formations that could be found on Earth, such as volcano eruptions, erosion formations, meteorite impacts, etc. After theoretically determining the type of destruction caused by an exploding Magnocraft, the author initiated his search for possible sites where versions of these vehicles, but built by an extraterrestrial civilization, could possibly have exploded. During this search he encountered numerous stories of the New Zealand Maoris, who repetitively claim that in ancient times the explosion of an extraterrestrial spacecraft wiped out most of the South Island. The author followed these Maori legends and that is how he came across the Tapanui Crater. Subsequent research conducted at the crater site supplied the evidence which resulted in his treatise on the subject. The classes of evidence are graphically displayed in Figure 1 and are discussed below.

1. The existence of a huge crater near Tapanui, the topography and attributes of which match exactly those of a powerful, near-ground aerial explosion. The Tapanui Crater is located on the west side of a triangle defined by three towns: Tapanui, Waipahi and Mataura. It should be noted that the indigenous meaning in the Maori language for these words are, respectively: "The-big-explosion", "The-place-of-the-exploding-fire", and what can be interpreted as "The-glowing-spacecraft." The geographical coordinates of the crater are: $46^{\circ} 04' S$ and $169^{\circ} 09' E$. Where the shock waves entered the ground the crater is triangular-shaped, with the apical angle of 100° . The remaining part of the crater is roughly elliptical with its long axis declined at -37° westward from the geographic north direction. Such a declination angle coincides with the magnetic south-north direction around the year 1178. The huge crater is imbedded on the western slope of a small hill locally known as "Pukeruau", which in Maori language can be interpreted as "The-hill-which-shook-the-Earth". The hill is formed of clay and silicone sand, so that the bottom of the crater does not reach native rock.

The enormous size of the crater indicates an energy yield exceeding 60 megaton of TNT, too enormous to be created as the result of friction, such as an object passing through the atmosphere.

The elliptical shape of the crater indicates the directed shockwaves of a "cumulative explosion" which do not occur naturally.

The almost completely closed perimeter, which certifies that the crater could not have been formed by erosion (landslip)

The central axis of the crater coincides with the magnetic south-north direction in the year 1178, which axis corresponds to the manner of slanting of magnetically propelled "cigar-shaped" vehicles and contradicts the direction of meteorite falls.

The crater's floor is covered with the remains of burned trees.

The soil behind the eastern side of the crater is covered with a thick layer of silicone sand which originated from the bottom of the crater, indicating that the sand was "splashed" up the hill as a result of the blast.

The inner topography of the crater suggests that it was formed from a series of four subsequent explosions. See Figure 2.

The crater lacks an uplifted rim and any meteorite fragments, features that are typical of a meteor impact crater.

The structure of the crater matches perfectly the expected effects of a powerful aerial explosion, which we have learned from contemporary experiments with various nuclear explosions.

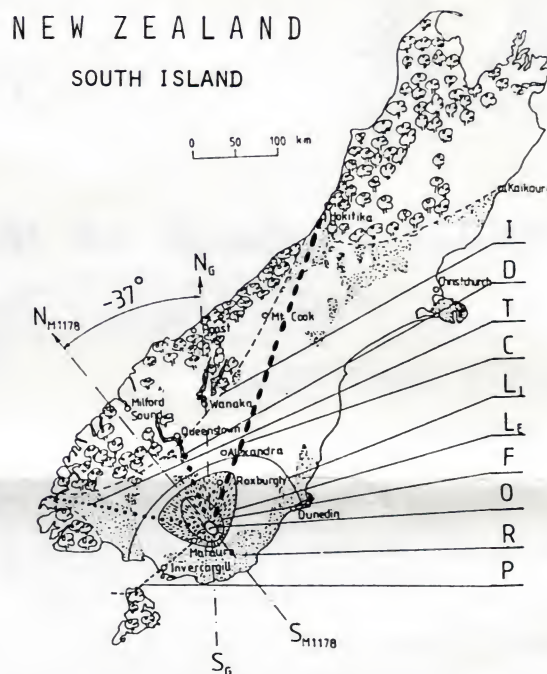


Fig. 1. Map of South Island, New Zealand showing the type and extent of damage caused by the Tapanui Explosion. The triangular area of devastation is highlighted. Symbols used in marking the map are:

- I - the range of the total brush fire ignited by the fall of red-hot china stones and spread by the reversed cyclone of implosion.
- D - the line along which unusual metallic debris (remains of the spaceships?) are being found.
- T - the major line of glassy "trinitite" deposits.
- C - the major line along which the heaviest fraction of china stones was deposited.
- Li - the area of trees felled by the cyclone of implosion, with tops oriented towards crater.
- Le - the area of trees felled by the shockwaves of the explosion, with roots oriented towards crater.
- F - the range of bush fires ignited directly by the fireball of the explosion.
- O - the Tapanui Crater where explosion occurred.
- R - the forests that regenerated before first white settlers arrived in 19th Century.
- P - the path followed by the vehicle prior to the explosion as recorded in Maori legends.
- Sg-Ng - the geographic south to north direction.
- Sml178-Nml178 - the central axis of the elliptical crater and the devastation area, which coincides with the magnetic south/north direction in the year 1178.

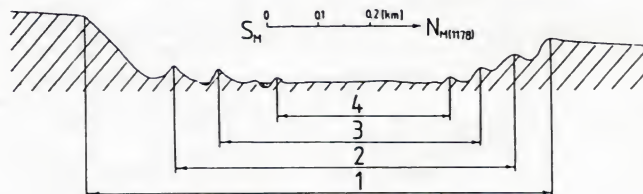


Fig. 2. Cross-section of the inner topography of the Tapanui Crater along the axis of explosion (Sm-Nm) showing the presence of four nested craters, each one inside the other.

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2. The historic lack of forests in the parts of the South Island surrounding the Tapanui Crater, in spite of the climatic conditions that encourage the growth of bushes and in spite of remains of trees scattered around the entire area, whose carbon dating consistently indicate a destruction occurring around the year 1178 in which over half of the South Island was ignited by an unknown cause. The appearance of these bush fires around 1178 is a well-established fact among New Zealand botanists, anthropologists, zoologists and geologists, but they have no theory as to how they started except to say that the Maoris themselves set the fires when they first came into the region around that time period. But this theory has a number of flaws: It does not explain how an area as large as 700 kilometers in diameter could have been burned (even crossing huge rivers) in which Moa birds were burned throughout the area; why would the Maoris deliberately set a fire which killed many of them as well as destroying most of the Moa birds, their chief source of food? Nor would it explain the concentric order in which the fallen trees lay around the crater.

3. The consistent radial order of the fallen trees around the crater. Two layers of fallen trees surround the crater. The first layer is a direct action of the explosion shockwaves in which the roots point towards the center. This area extends for 40 to 80 kilometers from the center. The secondary layer was caused by the reversed cyclone, or fire-storm action, in which the trees lie with their tops towards the crater, which layer extends as much as 100 kilometers from the center of the explosion.

4. A mass extinction of Moa birds in the region occurred around 1178, the remains of which show that the birds died in a conflagration.

5. The unusual magnetization of the soil and rocks near the crater. The entire crater area is magnetized in a turbulent, disorganized manner.

6. The area's deficiency of some sensitive micro-elements such as selenium, molybdenum and calcium.

7. The spread, radiating from the Tapanui Crater, of unusual ceramic stones called "china stones" and a rare mineral called "trinitite",

China stones are formed from large lumps of soil, clay, native rock and other original materials which were blasted from the crater by the explosion, formed together in a mass, aerodynamically shaped during flight, baked (fired) by the heat, glazed on the surface and then deposited as part of the post-explosion falls. The distinctive features of the china stones found at the Tapanui site are their spread along lines radiating outwards from the crater; the formation of small impact craters where they were initially deposited, the configuration of which craters indicate airborne arrival from the direction of the main crater; the gradual changes in the shapes and characteristics of the stones the farther away from the crater that they are found; fresh organic matter still trapped inside some of the stones; the detectable magnetization of the stones and smoke baked into the glaze of some of the stones.

"Trinitite" is composed of small globules of silicate formed into glassy droplets or bulbs. Trinitite is unknown in nature. All so-far discovered deposits of this rare mineral were formed during tests of nuclear bombs, or in the two powerful explosions whose origin can also be interpreted as technological; that is, at Tunguska and at Tapanui.

8. The Otago Province is well-known for its near-surface gold deposits. A hypothesis disseminated in some cratering literature states that an immediate consequence of a large-scale explosion is the post-shock uplift of originally deep-seated materials. The distribution of near-surface gold deposits in the South Island is concentrically located around the Tapanui Crater and seems to coincide with the path of shockwaves from the Tapanui explosion.

9. An analysis of Maori names in the vicinity of the Tapanui Crater shows that very frequently they

contain syntax components meaning: explosion, shooting firestorm, fire, cosmic entity or spacecraft, horn, descend or fall, moon, etc. The presence of these components is characteristic of that area of New Zealand only and in other parts of the country they rarely appear. When these names are translated they provide a fascinating record of a powerful explosion, the description of which coincides with the content of Maori legends. An extremely interesting feature of these Maori names is that, when located on the map, they seem to describe the explosion exactly as it would look while observed from the spots that bear these names. For example, close to the crater, names tell of the exploding fires, shooting columns of fires, etc. More distantly they tell of red hot areas, hot falling stones, etc. Faraway from the crater, names mention glowing sky, nights of fires, etc.

10. Maori legends represent eye witness descriptions of the spacecraft that caused the Tapanui explosion. The legend of one Maori tribe which lived near the present town of Maitua directly refers to the horn-shaped glowing object "with the moon-like face" that descended to Earth above the present-day Stewart Island, took an eastward course, flew above the Maitua, and then exploded at the Tapanui site. Note that the west-east flight path of the vehicle in this legend contradicts to the south-north direction of the crater's axis.

The Maitua legend is additionally supported by numerous other Maori stories describing a horn-shaped flying vehicle glowing like a moon that split apart above the Tapanui site, causing enormous disaster, fires, extinction of Moa birds, etc. Even the name for Stewart Island is connected with one of the legends. This name in Maori is "Raki-ura", which means "The-glowing-sky." It is supposed to have been given after the huge glowing spacecraft descended above this island and then at Tapanui blushed with rage and mortification.

11. There is a historical record of the Tapanui explosion which is dated June 18, 1178 (Julian Calendar) and made by Brother Gervase, a Chronicler at Canterbury Cathedral in England. The record describes the unusual visual distortions of the Moon's appearance that was witnessed by a group of monks at the Canterbury Cathedral. The record states:

"In this year, on the Sunday before the feast of Saint John the Baptist, after sunset when the moon had first become visible, a marvelous phenomenon was witnessed by some five or more men who were sitting there facing the moon. Now there was a bright new moon, and as usual in that phase, its horns were tilted towards the east and suddenly the upper horn split in two. From the midpoint of this division a flaming torch sprang up, spewing out, over a considerable distance, fire, hot coals and sparks. Meanwhile the body of the moon, which was below, writhed, as it were, in anxiety, and, to put it in the words of those who reported it to me and saw it with their own eyes, the moon throbbed like a wounded snake. Afterwards it resumed its proper state. This phenomenon was repeated a dozen times or more, the flame assuming various twisting shapes at random and then returning to normal. Then after these transformations the moon from horn to horn, that is along its whole length, took on a blackish appearance."

This author's interpretation of the above observation is as follows: The flash of the first vehicle that exploded over Tapanui was reflected from the moon like a mirror. Simultaneously the shockwaves of the explosion (magnetic and acoustic) spread through the upper atmosphere causing the image of the moon to apparently writhe. The principal of this writhing is similar to that of disturbance of water waving the image of a motionless coin from under the surface. After the first vehicle exploded, the next vehicles from the cigar-shaped stack exploded in se-

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quence, each of which caused a reflection of light, and shockwaves. When the explosions finished, a cloud of dust spread into the upper atmosphere gradually obstructing the color of the moon. Note that during the Tunguska Explosion in Siberia in 1908 the shockwaves circulated three times around our globe and the dust sprays caused unusual atmospheric phenomena noticeable in many countries.

It should be noted here that there is another interpretation of Gervase's record, made originally by Dr. Jack B. Hartung of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and published in his article in the Journal of Science, February 1978. This interpretation states that the monks witnessed a meteorite impacting the moon on its black side. A possible crater formed during that impact is the Giordano Bruno Crater, discovered during the Apollo mission. The Hartung interpretation has some inconsistencies which make the Tapanui interpretation more valid. For example, the monks claimed that the moon was apparently writhing and throbbing, and no meteorite could cause such a motion of the whole moon that its effects would be observable with a naked eye on Earth. According to Hartung, the meteorite was supposed to have hit the moon on its black side, and it would have been impossible for the monks to see fire on the Earth side. Further, it is difficult to see how a single meteorite could possibly cause a sequence of six or more explosions observed in succession by the monks, and the possibility of a string of meteorites hitting the moon in sequence and causing only a single crater can be excluded from consideration.

The evidence from the Tunguska and the Tapanui explosions teach us that extraterrestrial vehicles are not perfect - they explode every now and again, which means that there are probably a number of similar sites on Earth still waiting to be discovered. Potential investigators should look for the following factors:

1. Local legends and eye witness accounts of a conflagration initiated by a "bird of fire."
2. Grasslands and steppes in areas where the climatic conditions would otherwise encourage forest growth.
3. A radial spread of minerals such as china stones and trinitites.
4. Appearance of unusual atmospheric phenomena usually associated with magnetic anomalies.
5. The uplift of gold and other heavy minerals.
6. A huge crater (sometimes) with a meridian orientation of axis, revealing nestled craters.

When such sites are found, authors who expound an extraterrestrial hypothesis for such explosions must be prepared to defend the hypothesis against overwhelming conventional apathy.

Notes:

(1) Hundreds of books and articles have been published about the Tunguska Explosion. See, for example, The Fire Came By, by Baxter & Atkins, Doubleday (1976) and Warner Paperbacks (1976).

(2) See the author's treatise "The Magnocraft - Earth's Version of a UFO" (ISBN 0-9597698-6-2) which is available from the author.

JOSEF F. BLUMRICH, author of The Spaceships of Ezekiel and a retired NASA aeronautical engineer, will be included in the latest edition of the prestigious publication "Who's Who in the World." Mr. Blumrich was awarded the NASA Exceptional Performance Medal in 1972 for his work on the design of Skylab and the Space Shuttle. Mr. Blumrich's book on the Hopi Indians, Kasskara, has been published only in German. His address is P.O. Box 433, Estes Park, CO 80517 USA.

September 14, 1990 marks the 17th Anniversary of the founding of the ANCIENT ASTRONAUT SOCIETY.

ONE HUNDRED ISSUES OF ANCIENT SKIES

BY GENE M. PHILLIPS, Founder of the Society

This is the 100th issue of Ancient Skies, which has been published every two months, without interruption since its beginning in 1974. Quite a feat for a literary publication, many of which last only one or two years at the most!

Soon after founding the Society, I determined that we should have two publications. An informal one, such as a newsletter, and a Journal, possibly to be published quarterly. I thought that we might call the Journal Ancient Life; however, we soon realized that to publish a quarterly Journal with original articles would entail a tremendous amount of work, and money, so we decided to concentrate, for the time being, on a more modest publication which we refer to as our Logbook. But what would we call it and what would be its format?

After much deliberation, the title was decided at our family dinner table when my son, Gregory, asked: "How about Ancient Skies?" Expediency dictated the format and we soon discovered that it took a lot of material to fill four, typewritten, single-spaced pages; especially when we elected to rely on original articles in our field. We decided to publish every two months, which rolls around awfully fast.

We have been fortunate in receiving hundreds of articles from both well-known and unknown authors in our field and we have consistently presented a very high standard of interesting material of educational value to our members.

We are pleased to report that Ancient Skies is now received regularly in 87 countries of the world and has enjoyed being quoted and cited in diverse publications.

Alas, our Journal has not achieved lift-off, but maybe some day.

We now look forward to the second hundred issues of Ancient Skies.

AS A LIFELONG STUDENT OF PLATO AND ANCIENT GREEK philosophy/science, I was delighted with Erich von Daniken's article in Ancient Skies 17:3 on Animal Mutations in Ancient Egypt. Mr. von Daniken always provides creative insight into ancient enigmas, of which there are many in the Presocratics and Plato! For example, consider the tantalizingly eviscerated fragments of Empedocles: "On it, many foreheads without necks sprang forth, and arms wandered unattached, bereft of shoulders, and eyes strayed about alone, needing brows" (Frag. 57); "Limbs wandered alone" (Frag. 58); "Creatures with rolling gait and innumerable hands" (Frag. 60); and "Many creatures were created with a face and breast on both sides; offspring of cattle with the fronts of men, and again there arose offspring of men with heads of cattle; and mixed in part from man, in part of female sex, furnished with hairy limbs" (Frag. 61).

Another Greek oddity is found in Aristotle's enigmatic coupling of two unlikely species: "... who has no need for society because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god" (Pol. 1253a29). One wonders if the self-sufficient "beast" could have been the minotaur in his labyrinth!

Contemporary gene-splicing has undoubtedly been encouraged by ancient memories haunting our own hybrid species. Dr. M.C. Fox, P.O. Box 423, La Luz, New Mexico 88337 USA.

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